

Message Text

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PAGE 01 CANBER 08386 170420Z

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ACTION EB-07

INFO OCT-01 EA-07 IO-10 ISO-00 AGR-05 CIAE-00 COME-00

INR-07 LAB-04 NSAE-00 SP-02 STR-04 TRSE-00 CIEP-01

FRB-03 OMB-01 L-03 H-02 NSC-05 SS-15 SSO-00 NSCE-00

INRE-00 /077 W

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O R 170351Z DEC 75

FM AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7112

INFO USMISSION MTN GENEVA

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DEPT FOR JOE WILLIAMS EB/FTD

E.O. 11652/ N/A

TAGS: ETRD, GATT, MTN, AS

SUBJ: RUMORS RE INTENDED AUSTRALIAN INTENTION WITHDRAW FROM
MULTILATERAL FIBER AGREEMENT (MFA)

REF: WILLIAMS/FROST TELECON (NOTAL)

1. EMBOFF HAS TALKED TO B.F. MEERE, ACTING FIRST ASSISTANT SECRETARY, AND K.W. WILKINSON, ASSISTANT SECRETARY, INTERNATIONAL TRADE ORGANIZATIONS DIVISION, DEPARTMENT OF OVERSEAS TRADE WHO CONFIRMED EMBASSY IMPRESSION THAT NEITHER PRIME MINISTER FRASER NOR ANY MEMBER OF HIS GOVERNMENT HAS TO DATE MADE ANY ANNOUNCEMENT, OR EVEN HINT, AS TO POSSIBLE AUSTRALIAN WITHDRAWAL FROM MFA. MEERE SAID THAT ONE COULD NOT EXPECT NEW GOVERNMENT TO FOCUS ON ANYTHING AS DETAILED AS AUSTRALIA'S RELATIONSHIP TO MFA UNTIL WELL INTO JANUARY OR EVEN EARLY FEBRUARY.

2. MEERE TOLD EMBOFF THAT DEPARTMENTAL OFFICIALS CONCERNED WOULD BE EXPECTED PUT ENTIRE QUESTION OF AUSTRALIA'S RELATIONSHIP TO MFA, INCLUDING PROBLEMS OF SINGAPORE AND THE PHILIP-
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PAGE 02 CANBER 08386 170420Z

PPINES AND KNOWN USG POSITION BEFORE NEW GOVERNMENT. WHEN EMBOFF

SOUGHT EXPRESSION OF ASSURANCE THAT GOA WOULD NOT DECIDE WITHDRAW FROM MFA, MEERE HASTILY INTERJECTED THAT WHILE IT ONLY HIS PERSONAL OPINION, POSSIBILITY COULD NOT BE RULED OUT ENTIRELY, ALTHOUGH HE DID NOT WANT US TO JUMP TO PREMATURE CONCLUSIONS.

3. COMMENT: MEERE'S RELUCTANCE ENTIRELY RULE OUT POSSIBLE WITHDRAWAL FROM MFA REFLECTS, WE THINK, VIEW ON PART OF GOA OFFICIALS, WHICH IS SHARED BY EMBASSY, THAT NEW GOVERNMENT LIKELY BE MORE PROTECTIONIST THAN BASICALLY FREE TRADE ORIENTED LABOR GOVERNMENT.

4. WE ALSO SUGGEST, HOWEVER, THAT IT WOULD BE PREMATURE REACT, ANY MORE THAN WE HAVE, UNTIL SUCH TIME AS THERE ARE MORE CONCRETE INDICATIONS OF POSSIBLE GOA INTENTION WITHDRAW. U.S. VIEWS ALREADY FULLY KNOWN TO GOA AND HAVE BEEN REEMPHASIZED BY URGENCY WITH WHICH WE REACTED TO RUMOR.
PERCIVAL

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Message Attributes

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Margaret P. Grafeld
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